

A list of sources of further information on invertebrate fossils from both print literature and from websites is given at the end of the volume. The bryozoan website of FNCV Member, Phil Beck, at <http://www.civgeo.rmit.edu.au/bryozoa/default.html> is given as one such source. A comprehensive index is provided.

The dedicated enthusiast will find that this book covers the subject of invertebrate fossils well.

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Ocean shores to desert dunes: the native vegetation of New South Wales and the ACT

By David Keith

Publisher: *Department of Environment and Conservation, Hurstville NSW, 2004.*
353 pages. ISBN 0731367804. RRP \$84.00

Many Australians have no idea of the diversity of vegetation types within their country, their state or even within the region where they live. This is a lamentable situation indeed. The vegetation of Australia is unique; the diversity of the vegetation is unique. It is wonderful, therefore, to see a book such as *Ocean Shores to Desert Dunes* as it describes the kaleidoscope of our natural vegetation, albeit just for New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory.

The book is very well written and beautifully presented. It is divided into three sections. Part I is an introduction to native vegetation and explains how Australia's heritage is closely entwined with the vegetation. It describes the ecology of vegetation, the classification and mapping of vegetation and how to use the book. The key on pages 26-28 can be used to determine the vegetation formations anywhere in NSW and the ACT. The simple instructions and glossary ensure that even the uninitiated will have no problems using the key.

Part II describes the vegetation formations and classes. The appropriate vegetation class is determined by simply reading the descriptive profiles within the identified vegetation formation and the process of elimination. There are 12 vegetation formations: Rainforest, Wet Sclerophyll Forest, Grassy Woodland, Grassland, Dry

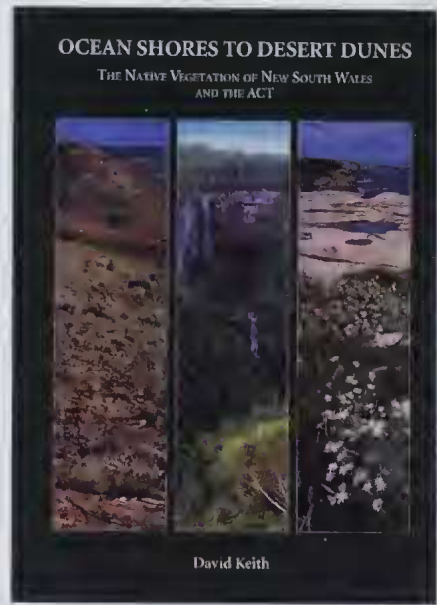
Sclerophyll forest, Heathland, Alpine complex, Freshwater Wetland, Forested Wetland, Saline Wetland, Semi-arid Woodland and Arid Shrubland. Dry Sclerophyll Forest has the greatest number of vegetation classes, 24, while each of the wetlands has only four. Each vegetation class is presented within a page opening. The structure of the vegetation is described as is its extent (along with a map) and a little of the ecology of the area or pertinent issues. In every instance, a list of indicative species for each stratum is provided, as are superb photographs.

The introduction to each vegetation formation is specific to that formation. For example, the introduction to Alpine Complex explains why its four classes are grouped into the same formation; it discusses why there are no trees above the tree line and why Australia's tree line is so much lower than tree lines of many other countries. Some of the unique fauna is explored, including the often forgotten invertebrates. Many species of invertebrates are found only in the Alps. One of these is a grasshopper that can change its colour to maximize or minimize heat-absorption in the cooler or warmer parts of the day respectively. The evolutionary links of the Australian alpine flora is described, with some being typically Gondwanan while others have relatives in temperate latitudes of the northern hemi-

sphere. The flora also is described as being 'an evolutionary pump'. Human use of the area is described and, importantly, so are the effects of climate change. Significantly, the area covered by snow is predicted to shrink over the next thirty years by 18-66 per cent!

Part III comprises compilation maps of the native vegetation of NSW. These detail existing vegetation and reconstructed vegetation. There are three appendices. One provides estimates of present-day area of vegetation classes in NSW and the ACT and per cent cleared since settlement. Another lists endangered ecological communities and their inferred relationships to the vegetation classes, and the third lists the changes to vegetation class and formation names between version 1.1 of the vegetation classification of NSW and version 2.1 (this book).

Ocean Shores to Desert Dunes is ideal, not only for the student of vegetation formations but also for someone with no knowledge of vegetation classification. In fact, if this book was provided to a person with no interest in vegetation, they would become a convert.



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Albatross: elusive mariners of the Southern Ocean

by Aleks Terauds and illustrated by Fiona Stewart

Publisher: CSIRO Publishing, 2006. 176 pages, paperback;
colour photographs. ISBN 1877069264. RRP \$39.95

Albatross is a fine work that focuses on five species of Albatross that breed at Australian sites in the Southern Ocean. The book is lavishly illustrated with stunning photographs of some of the largest flying birds on earth. Scattered throughout one also finds images of the remote sites at which they breed and the other mostly marine species that share these islands.

The book consists of five easy-to-read chapters. The reader is first provided with an overview of the four breeding sites,

three scattered around Tasmania and the fourth, Macquarie Island, well to the south and approximately halfway to the Antarctic continent. A chapter documenting the catastrophic impact that humans have had on the marine mammals and birds in Bass Strait and the Southern Ocean follows. Here we learn that 18th and 19th century industries, focused on the recovery of oil, fur and feathers, decimated marine vertebrate populations. In a climate of economic greed and fierce competition